

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /042 W

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R 061441Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8398

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 4263

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, GH

SUBJ: UNVIERSITIES MAY REOPEN, MORE DEMONSTRATIONS LIKELY

1. A TOP LEADER OF KUMASI STUDENTS UNION TOLD POL
OFFS JUNE 6 THAT UNIVERISITIES WOULD PROBABLY REOPEN
BY FRIDAY, JUNE 10, BUT THAT STUDENTS WOULD NOT BE
RETURNING FOR EXAMINATIONS BUT TO DEMONSTRATE AGAINST
UNION GOVERNMENT AND ACHEAMPONG'S CORRUPT RULE.
SOURCE CONFIRMED REPORTS IN PRESS JUNE 6 THAT THE
ASANTEHENE AND CHIEF JUSTIC AZU CRABBE WERE MEDIATING
BETWEEN STUDENTS AND REGIME AND TO FIND GROUNDS FOR
REOPENING UNIVERSITIES. HE ALSO SAID THAT STUDENT
LEADERS IN KUMASI WERE IN CONTACT WITH GHANA
BAR ASSOCIATION, WHICH SHARES THEIR OPPOSITION TO
REGIME, AND THAT STUDENT LEADERS FAVOR A RETURN TO
PARTY POLITICS, INCLUDING RETURN TO GHANA OF OUSTED
PRIME MINISTER BUSIA.

2. SOURCE REPORTED HE WAS BEING SOUGHT BY ARMY
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AUTHORITIES FOR HIS PART IN ARRANGING MAY 13 STUDENT
DEMONSTRATIONS AND SMALLER DEMONSTRATIONS ON MAY 20
AND HAD NARROWLY ESCAPED BEING ARRESTED AT HOME ONE
NIGHT. HE INDICATED ARMY AND POLICE FORCES ARE MANNING
STRATEGIC INTERSECTIONS IN KUMASI TO KEEP STUDENTS FROM
GETTING TO DOWNTOWN AREAS I EVENT OF DEMONSTRATIONS.
HE CLAIMED STUDENTS AT POLYTECHNICS (WHICH WERE NOT

CLOSED) ARE AGITATING AGAIST REGIME ALONG WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEADERS WHO BEGAN FIRST ROUND OF DEMONSTRATIONS.

3. VISIBLY NERVOUS AT FIRST, SOURCE SAID HE HOPED EMBASSY COULD PROVIDE ASYLUM AND GET HIM QUICKLY TO US, THUS FOILING KUMASI SECURITY FORCES ON HIS TRAIL. TOLD THAT EMBASSY COULD NOT HELP IN THIS WAY BUT THAT HE COULD APPLY FOR VISA LIKE ANY OTHER GHANAIAN CITIZEN, HE RELAXED SOMEWHAT AND WARMED TO HIS SUBJECTS-- ABUSES OF ACHEAMPONG REGIME AND STUDENTS' REJECTION OF UNION GOVERNMENT. ASKED WHAT ALTERNATIVE HE PROPOSED, HE CALLED FOR BUSIA TO COME BACK AND HEAD INTERIM GOVERNMENT, PENDING REINTRODUCTION OF PARTY POLITICS AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS. SOURCE'S OWN PLANS ARE UNCLEAR BUT HE MENTIONED TRYING TO GET TO NIGERIA: HE DOES NOT SPEAK FRENCH AND THUS WILL NOT SEEK SANCTUARY IN TOGO OR IVORY COAST.

4. COMMENT: WE DO NOT THINK SUPPORT FOR BUSIA AMONG LAWYERS AND STUDENTS, SUCH AS IT IS, REPRESENTS ANY GROUNDSWELL OF OPINION IN COUNTRY AT LARGE. BUSIA AND HIS FORMER GOVERNMENT REMAIN IN VERY BAD ODOR AMONG MOST OF OUR GHANAIAN CONTACTS, BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY. WE ARE INCLINED TO THE VIEW THAT RESURRECTION OF HIS NAME AMONG CERTAIN ANTI-ACHEAMPONG PLOTTERS IS MORE LIKELY A REFLECTION OF THE LACK OF AGREEMENT ON ANY OTHER FIGURE OR WELL-KNOWN FIGURE AROUND WHOM THE OPPOSITION CAN RALLY IS ONE OF ACHEAMPONG'S MAJOR
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STRENGTHS. NEVERTHELESS, THE FACT THAT BUSIA'S NAME IS BEING MENTIONED AGAIN AS A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE LEVEL OF DISCONTENT NOW FACING THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT.
SMITH

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